

Update #4 to the Higher Education Report: Recommendations for Reopening Undergraduate Colleges and Universities
PHASE 3 PLANNING FRAMEWORK FOR REOPENING UNDERGRADUATE RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
Issued by Mark Ojakian, State Lead for Reopening Higher Education
May 26, 2020

The Report of the Higher Education Subcommittee submitted to the Governor on May 6, 2020 sets forth the guidance and requirements for colleges and universities to reopen undergraduate residential programs. See <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/News/20200506-Recommendations-to-Governor-Lamont-for-a-phased-reopening-of-colleges-and-universities.pdf?la=en> for the May 6 report and for the update memos that have been issued. Additional update memos are likely to be issued during the summer as information is obtained.

Four plans are required to be submitted by each institution; these include:

- A plan for repopulating the campus (the reentry of students)
- A plan for monitoring the health of students, faculty and staff
- A plan for containing cases that develop
- A plan for shutdown of the campus if it becomes necessary.

The plans are to be submitted to the Department of Public Health (Thomas.St.Louis@ct.gov; Av.Harris@ct.gov and Brie.Wolf@ct.gov), with a copy to Mark Ojakian, whom the Governor appointed to be the State's lead for the reopening of higher education in Connecticut (CSCU-President@ct.edu.) The Plans need to be submitted in advance of reopening under Phase 3; the Subcommittee recommends that they be submitted no later than three weeks before the intended arrival of students. Students may return to campus on or after August 24, 2020.

This memorandum outlines the requirements for each Plan as interpreted by the Subcommittee.

Please note that the State will likely make additional guidance during the summer that may modify this Framework. Please visit the Update section of the Subcommittee's Report regularly for supplemental counsel.

REOPENING PLANS FOR UNDERGRADUATE RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN PHASE 3

Name of Institution:

Senior COVID-19 Coordinator (Name and Title):

Email and cell phone:

Intended date of arrival of the first students (not before August 24):

Intended date of classes starting:

Intended duration of the fall semester or quarter:

Date submitted:

PART 1 - PLAN FOR REPOPULATING THE CAMPUS (the reentry of students)

Classrooms: Declaration that 6-feet of physical spacing has been achieved

Some limited commentary should be included to indicate how this was achieved (e.g., splitting the class into multiple sections, converting non-classrooms into instructional spaces, greater use of evenings, weekends or online instruction, reduction of students on campus)

Where six foot spacing is not possible for clinical training or workforce development programs, please describe your plans.

Note: some institutions may want to provide guidance on the flow of students in and out of classrooms at peak times in order to achieve physical distancing.

Note: there may be some institutional programs for workforce development and health care where exceptions to the 6-foot physical distancing will be appropriate. Those cases can be referred to Mark Ojakian as the State Lead.

Dining Halls: Declaration that 6-feet of physical spacing has been achieved

Some limited commentary about how this was achieved (e.g., two shifts for each meal; use of new spaces as spill-over dining halls; more grab-and-go meals)

Declaration that the State's restaurant guidelines with the exception of capacity limits have been achieved (e.g., single use condiments, cleaning of surfaces after every diner).

Spaces "where other groups congregate": Declaration that 6-feet of physical spacing has been achieved where students congregate, such as in libraries and common spaces/student unions and with extracurricular activities.

Some limited commentary about how each is being achieved. A future Update on Athletics is expected.

Dormitories:

Declaration:

1. that the guidelines for **dormitory density** are being followed, which allow, but do not require, that roommates and suitemates can be treated as a family unit;
2. that six-foot spacing is being preserved with other dorm building occupants (beyond the room/suite) ;
3. that the institution is allocating bedrooms (in the dorms or elsewhere) to accommodate students who must be isolated; and
4. about how the institution is accommodating those students who are at greater risk for complications from COVID-19 .

Some limited commentary about how the institution has addressed these issues.

Declaration that the guidelines for **dormitory bathrooms** are being followed. [See Update #3]

Some limited commentary about how this is being achieved.

Orientation/Arrival: Declaration that the institution is organizing orientation and the return of students to maintain 6-foot physical distancing.

Some limited commentary about how this is being planned especially with the need for immediate testing (e.g., is the return being “spread out” over a longer period or being staged differently?)

Personal protective equipment: Masks: Declaration that all faculty, staff and students have been informed to wear masks.

Limited commentary about whether these groups will be supplied masks or counted on to provide their own with some backup inventory maintained by the institution for those who forget. Some commentary about how the institutions will respond to non-compliance (e.g., will students be prohibited from entering classrooms if they don’t have masks?)

Other PPE requirements: Declaration that special populations on campus (e.g., health care workers, kitchen or custodial staff) will follow any special PPE requirements mandated more generally for those populations.

Disinfection: Declaration that (i) hand sanitizers are available at entrances to all buildings, classrooms and dining halls, (ii) disposable wipes are available in all bathrooms, classrooms and other shared facilities (e.g., copy machines, coffee stations) for wiping down surfaces, (iii) students, faculty and staff are reminded to wash hands frequently, and (iv) public, corridor and office spaces and their bathrooms are cleaned in accordance with the State’s general guidelines for businesses.

Travel: Declaration that students, faculty and staff have been advised to avoid unnecessary travel domestically and internationally.

This counsel will be lifted as conditions warrant.

Staffing: Declaration that faculty, students and staff have been explicitly instructed not to come to work or leave their rooms if they are experiencing COVID-like symptoms. Also a Declaration about what advice, if any, the institution is giving to those who have higher likelihood of serious illness from COVID-19.

Access: Declaration of the institution's plans for visitors to the campus.

Testing upon arrival: See below.

PART 2 – PLAN FOR MONITORING THE HEALTH OF STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF

Testing of students in residential institutions for the COVID-19 virus upon arrival on campus:

Declaration that the institution will conduct these tests in a way that achieves physical distancing as well as a declaration that students will be quarantined until the test results are known. (Note: there may be revised guidance from the State as the summer progresses.)

Some limited commentary about how these plans will be implemented. If a rapid test with immediate results is available by late summer, then students will not have to be quarantined.

Note that for commuter students at residential institutions, the intention is that those commuting students will also be tested upon arrival.

Note that community colleges and other non-residential institutions with only commuting students need only ensure that those who are symptomatic be tested.

Testing of students for the COVID-19 virus a second time 10 to 14 days following the initial test:

Declaration of the institution's plan to conduct this second test, in the event this Guideline is not lifted.

Public health guidelines will be forthcoming later on further testing during the course of the year.

Testing of faculty and staff who interact with students or their living spaces shortly before residential students return to campus: Declaration that the institution plans to test faculty and student-facing staff immediately before the semester starts.

Testing strategy beyond the re-entry period. Declaration that the institution will test all symptomatic students, faculty, and staff who interact with students or their living spaces, as well as close contacts.

Public health guidelines will be forthcoming in the fall concerning the frequency of subsequent testing of asymptomatic students, faculty, and staff.

Appointment of a COVID-19 Coordinator: Declaration of who the Coordinator is and that he or she will (i) be the liaison with the coordinators at the other colleges and universities who will convene periodically during the fall (and beyond if needed) and (ii) oversee reporting for the common Dashboard that will be developed for the higher education sector.

The Subcommittee Report called for the development of a common dashboard this summer so that all institutions can create “a daily census of such items as new positive cases, hospitalizations and discharges, and see graphic displays of the history of daily reports.” No personally identifiable health information will be included, but this regular pulse information will give an overview of what is happening on campuses across the state and will ensure that college and university cases do not get “buried” within regional reporting.

Protocol for collecting information about COVID-19 cases: Declaration that the institution has developed a protocol indicating that faculty, students and staff have been asked to inform immediately the campus health service (or a designated administrator) that they are experiencing possible COVID-19 symptoms, as well as a protocol for testing symptomatic students. (For students, faculty, or staff using an external health care provider, the institution should request that they inform a designated administrator if they test positive.)

Some limited commentary about this protocol, which will help the institution respond with alacrity to any “hot spots” of infection on campus and to undertake the contact tracing outlined in Part 3. Institutions should consider using an app to facilitate daily reporting of symptoms.

PART 3- PLAN FOR CONTAINMENT

Isolation space: Declaration that the institution has designated rooms and feeding arrangements for students who test positive and must be isolated.

Commentary about where and how much isolation space has been designated.

Isolation protocol: Declaration that when a case of infection is detected, the institution will isolate the infected students for 14 days, trace contacts, quarantine all roommates and suitemates and consider quarantining others with close contact.

Medical care for those isolated: Declaration of how the institution intends to provide medical care for infected students.

Daily telemedicine calls might be one part of monitoring.

Quarantine protocol: Declaration that the institution intends to quarantine students who are judged to require it.

Short commentary about who the institution intends to quarantine (roommates, suitemates, and other close contacts?), and where (in a separate facility, or allowing roommates and suitemates to remain together if their shared bathroom is not used by others)

Contact tracing. Declaration of how the institution intends to conduct contact tracing.

Institutions may prefer to train staff to serve as contact tracers, or ask the Department of Public Health for assistance, or provide their students, faculty, and staff with one of the several apps that are expected to be available by late summer.

Liaison with regional hospitals and health care facilities. Declaration that the institution has been in contact with the key health care facilities in its area and has a liaison at each to assist if a surge occurs on campus and/or in the region.

PART 4 – PLAN FOR SHUTDOWN

Shutdown initiated by the institution if a serious outbreak occurs on campus: Declaration of the protocol for an orderly shutdown if a serious outbreak occurs on campus that the institution or relevant state or local authorities conclude requires shutdown. This may warrant different treatment of local students and those who need to travel to other states or countries.

"The best practice according to the Public Health Committee of Reopen Connecticut is for the institution upon shutdown to keep on campus all persons with COVID-19 who are in isolation until they have been cleared to discontinue isolation according to CDC (or the Institution's) guidelines and also keep on campus those who are being quarantined until their quarantine period expires, according to CDC guidelines. This avoids sending students home when they can be contagious and when many will be using public transportation to travel."

Shutdown of the State: Declaration that the institution will follow the instructions of the Governor if he determines that a statewide shutdown is again required.

Plan for continuation of instruction if a shutdown occurs: Declaration about whether the institution would intend to continue instruction online if a shutdown occurs.

Some short commentary about what is intended. Note that if the gating condition for reduction in the prevalence of the virus is not met this summer, the opening of the semester could be delayed; this, too, would require institutions to determine whether to start school online.

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FURTHER AMENDMENTS TO THE FRAMEWORK WILL BE POSTED AS UPDATES TO THE MAY 6, 2020 REPORT OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE.

For questions, contact Mark Ojakian at CSCU-President@ct.edu

